ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC ACCESSION NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW
ED001050	N.A.	N.A.	

4. AUTHOR(S):
Detroit Great Cities School Improvement Project

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED:
Detroit Great Cities School Improvement Project, Annual Report, 1962-63

6. PUBLICATION TITLE:
N A.

7. EDITOR(S):
N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN
ORG Great Cities School Improvement Project
ST. 453 Stimson
CITY, STATE Detroit, Michigan
TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE
Great Cities School Improvement Project Detroit

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	63	13

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE YES ☐ NO ☐

COPYRIGHT GRANTED YES ☐ NO ☒

COPYRIGHT RELEASE FILED YES ☐ NO ☐

TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☐
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR
report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)
curriculum changes, after-school projs., compensatory edu., culturally disadvantaged, deprivation difficulties, urban edu., in-service edu., summer projects, evening progs., adult programs, teacher orientation, inter-agency involvements, parent involvement, public schools, teacher training, specialized personnel, school-comm. relations, Detroit Great Cities School Improvement Project, Great Cities, Detroit

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Noting that the child of limited background has considerable native ability but has not been able to reach his potential due the kind of teaching and curriculum offered in the typical public school, the Detroit project has attempted to compensate for the difficulties resulting from deprivation. Direct efforts have been made toward in-service education of principals, teachers, and school personnel; after school, evening and summer classes for evening and adults; organizational and curricular change; and inter-agency involvement and utilization of additional staff in each project school. An analysis of each of the above programs is made. To implement the successful aspects of the program, evaluation is continuous. Constant communication with other school officials is imperative.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OF PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

Detroit Great Cities School Improvement Project

Annual Report 1962-63

If 1961-62 was the year of the "kaleidoscope" for the Detroit Project, then 1962-63 can be called the year that the flicking patterns of shift and change became clarified. For in this year our Project has stabilized to the degree that we can point with some sureness to our strengths and to our weaknesses. We still encompass a varied range in all of our endeavors. But in this year our ability to assess has strengthened. As in the previous years of the Project we have proceeded upon the assumption that the ultimate objectives of the Detroit Project are no different than those of the school system itself. We know that the child of limited background has considerable native ability--no more or no less than all children. Our thrust rests on the one sure fact about this child--that he has not been able to realize his potential with the kind of teaching and curriculum the typical public school offers. Adverse environmental and family circumstance offer no help. The school has to do it.

Our Detroit Project schools have attempted to compensate for the difficulties resulting from deprivation. Essentially, direct efforts have been toward the development or improvement of efforts in: In-Service Education; After-School and Evening Classes for Children and Adults; Organizational and Curricular change; Inter-Agency Involvement; Utilization of Additional Staff in each Project School.

The following analysis may indicate the patterns followed for 1962-63:

I. Programs for Youth

A. After-school and evening

Efforts in this direction are successful in that our programs appear to be a permanent, integral part of the school-communities in which they are housed.

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It is apparent to most school officials that this aspect of the Project has "taken hold" to the extent that withdrawal of support would be extremely destructive.

The seven schools variously offer enrichment, remedial, and recreational activities in the after-school and evening hours. The major difference between schools rests upon the philosophical base of the program. In one school all activities in which children are involved are clearly seen as vital parts of the total curriculum. Thus, in this school, the curriculum is extended and the total staff is aware of the impact of the total program upon the children involved. In other schools the after-school and evening program is regarded as something extra and compensatory. In these schools communication with "Regular" school for the purpose of incorporating learnings from the "extended" program does not exist. Nonetheless, these programs have also proved effective for the school and community. Many dozens of sample activities can be listed for this after-school evening program. This may serve as a sampling:

Piano lessons	Art	Crafts	Dancing
Charm	Choral	Story-Hour	Sewing
Boy's Club	Library	Junior Block Club	

In addition to programs provided by the school, various public agencies have taken advantage of the schools' "we've space and time" offer to provide other kinds of programming. These groups used Project schools extensively in 1962-63:

Boy Scouts, Family Service Organization, Merrill-Palmer Institute, Neighborhood Service Organization, University of Michigan, School of Social Work, Detroit Department of Parks and Recreation, YMCA, Wayne State University, Episcopal Church, Neighborhood Block Clubs and other private clubs.

A total of classes and clubs for 1962-63 is computed to be 106. Approximately 2500 children and youth have been involved in the various aspects of the program.

B. Summer

There is little doubt that a form of year around-program is necessary and desirable for our inner-city schools. Our experiments with a "free-wheeling and free" summer program have proved to be of real value for the majority of our experimental schools. A combination enrichment-remedial program has been offered, with a particular emphasis on remediation for the secondary schools. In several instances the schools have benefited school staff as well as children. All children seem to benefit by having "somewhere to go and something to do," if that something is interesting, relaxed, and informal. Several staffs have benefited because of the freedom, even the mandate, to experiment with new ways and to explore aspects of the established curriculum. In 1962-63 1500 pupils participated in summer programs. Staff for the Summer program included regular teachers and administrators, teachers from near-by schools, high-school and university students living in the school community and persons from other city agencies. Total staff for the seven summer programs totaled 168.

In all instances where sound pre-planning for the summer program included teachers, pupils, and parents, the program was successful. In the one school where little or no planning transpired, the program was poorly attended and was unsuccessful.

I. Programs for Adults

We continue to program for adults with the basic purpose of getting parents, and neighbors, to relate themselves to the school. And perhaps more important,

to have the school come to understand the nature of the community and the hopes and aspirations of its inhabitants. Skilled programming by an urban school system for adults of the depressed communities, is not well established. We have depended upon the composite skills of the School-Community Agent, administrators, teachers, community leaders, and agency personnel.

"Trial and error" continues to be the rule. Offerings have been extremely varied, ranging from "yoga" and "helping your child with homework," to more technical classes, such as bookkeeping and shorthand. Attendance has often been low, but some programs draw well or steadily for no visible reason, except that they catch the fancy.

It is difficult for the great "fortress" school suddenly to embrace the adult school community. We did not know these people. They did not know us. Mutual respect and understanding comes gradually but definitely year by year. In 1962-63 we are reaching more and more of the hard-to-reach. We are no longer hoodwinked by the mere involvement of the "PTAers" into presuming we are getting the community. Non-parents, and senior citizens are beginning to participate in our program. One of the junior high schools has been most successful in reaching the 18-25 year olds, out of school and work, some of them parents.

Most of our activities concentrate in the following areas: informal clubs and classes, leadership training, homemaking activities, formal parent group activities, and social functions. The average number of participants each week in the total seven school program has been approximately 250.

III. Involvement of Agencies in After-School Programming

We presume that the "fortress" school must open its gates and seek the help of all public and private agencies if it is to combat successfully the problems inherent in education for inner-city children. Our Project schools have made rather intensive efforts in this direction. We have capitalized upon the relationships established by the school-community agents, by the principal, and by teachers who have had contact with other agencies. The project staff has nurtured sound, working relationships with staffs of all major agencies in the community. We continue to enjoy heavy involvement with Wayne State University, Michigan State University, Mercy College and Merrill-Palmer Institute. The City Health Department continues to cooperate with our one school health clinic experiment. The Neighborhood Service and Family Service Organizations continue to utilize our schools and communities as service outlets. Parks and Recreation Departments have modified their programs cooperatively to complement, rather than compete with, our after-school and evening programs. Various church organizations have actively supplied volunteer services for our schools. The Episcopal Diocese offers our staffs the use of their camp center called Parish-field. This we use for in-service training meetings. The Junior League of Detroit has offered volunteer services for our schools. The Northern Tutorial Movement has been oriented by our staff and has in turn provided one-to-one tutoring for many of our secondary school students. In short, as the City leaders and their agencies come to look at service to inner-city schools, and as the school establishment itself looks for a methodology with which to incorporate volunteer and agency resources, it has turned to our Project for use and for information.

IV. In-Service Education

Project school staffs remain consistent with staffs across the school system. Project schools exercise no special prerogatives in teacher selection, so staffs run the normal range from the completely committed teacher to the incompetent job-holder. We are convinced that we are developing enough committed teachers within the Project to make a clear "difference." In-Service kinds of meetings which deal with the building of sound attitudes toward the pupils of the inner-city are not too difficult to develop. Efforts to modify and improve curriculum, which require consistent meetings, are much more difficult to produce. The major difficulty rests in the system-wide attitude toward the provision of released time for such meetings. Another difficulty rests in the particular administrative style of an individual principal.

The following list includes much of the effort of the Project toward the provision of improved In-Service Education for teachers and administrators:

1. Principals. All principals in the project meet every two weeks with the entire staff of the project. The content of many of the meetings is the thinly veiled stuff of in-service training. This includes discussions of techniques for curricular and instructional improvement. Meetings are often attended by various guests from the Detroit area, who provide information related to possible improvement of the schools. Guests have ranged from the Superintendent of Detroit Schools and other school officials to Agency officials and business and industry leaders. Assistant principals have also benefited from monthly meetings which allow for exchange of information and ideas.

2. Orientation of new teachers. Two major meetings have been held during this semester to orient new teachers to the major assumptions of this project. One meeting accommodated three of our schools and the second meeting provided for the remaining four schools. The meetings ran from 3 to 7:30 P.M. and included dinner. The Project staff presented an over-view of the project. This was followed by small groups and school group discussions.

3. Teachers Coordinating Council. Each school in the Project has provided from two to four teachers as representatives to the Coordinating Council. The major goal of the Council is to provide immediate access to teacher concerns and opinions about the potential and the goals of the project and to send the word from this office along directly to school teaching staffs. The Council, it is hoped, will also serve, through the total group and through individual members as a catalyst for action in individual schools in the area of curriculum improvement. The Council meets every four weeks. A steering committee also meets regularly to plan future meetings. A meeting was provided at Parishfield, the church campsite metioned earlier. This was a two-day meeting and included all council members and the Project staff. The meeting was highly successful and identified the council as a group with mutually held goals for the improvement of education in inner-city schools. The content of the meeting generally centered around the broad topic, "what is successful teaching?" rather than the discussion of this program's effectiveness, or that technique's use.

4. Teachers. Individual schools have continued to provide in-service educational experiences for groups of teachers. Generally the individual schools have centered around the problems of teaching in the language arts. Many of the meetings utilize the project's reading consultant as a resource person. Others have utilized other staff members for consultation. One school used the Parishfield site to provide a two-day meeting for twenty-six teachers. The two days were spent in pursuit of ways to improve teaching procedures and clear communication channels within the school.

Several schools have utilized Wayne State University and have provided an off-campus course offering within the school.

The Project Evaluator has established continuous meetings for those teachers in the schools who are working with new guidance materials.

One of the secondary schools, through a committee of teachers has produced a handbook called "Homeroom Guidance Procedures." This was edited by the staff and was printed in quantity by the school system.

5. Footnotes. The project staff-writer continues to produce a monthly (more or less) document called "Footnotes." This booklet serves to keep the various staffs informed of project activities in the various schools. It also serves to provoke discussion and action through articles and readings which touch upon economic, political-social aspects of the inner city and its children.

6. Special Personnel. The visiting teachers, coaching teachers and school-community agents meet regularly with the project staff for information and skill development. They often meet with guests from various universities and city agencies.

V. Organizational and Curricular Changes

Relatively few bona-fide organizational changes have taken place in the Project schools. Two of the elementary schools have undertaken a non-graded primary organization. One of these schools also provided pre-school experiences for children who would enter the non-graded primary. This year the pre-school program has been curtailed because of financial shortages. Block-time programs continue at one of the junior high schools. One of the elementary schools continues with a modification in the time schedule of the Detroit platoon organization. The school has increased the blocks of time per teacher. The same school engages in a modified form of team-teaching in fifth and sixth grade language arts. This is done to capitalize on the teaching specialties of two staff members. The senior high school this year has begun a series of meetings cutting across departmental lines, with the avowed purpose of curriculum improvement.

There is need for this kind of cross germination in all schools, but particularly in secondary schools. Too often the existing structures appear inviolate. Through meetings and discussion some headway is being made. After dozens of meetings school administrators are beginning to believe that they have some autonomy as individual school leaders.

VI. Roles of Specialized Personnel

A. Visiting Teacher

The use of a visiting teacher on a full-time basis in the project schools has made a significant change in case-load capacity and total staff attitude toward this service. The full-time assignment enables the visiting teacher to enlarge the case-load base, to become intimately acquainted with pupils, families,

and teachers, and to carry cases to logical completions beneficial to all concerned. Administrators accept the visiting teacher as a full-time asset to the total school operation. It is quite clear that inner-city schools certainly need the services of this specialist. It is not clear whether or not the visiting teacher can and should offer services to the school staff beyond that of the referral case-worker and casual counselor on classroom behavior problems for a few inquisitive teachers. It is thought by some staff members that perhaps the visiting teacher can also serve in a key curriculum improvement role. The nature of the visiting teacher training provides this person with specialized knowledge of child growth and development. Can this person then be used as an important staff member as we look to improved curriculum? Most visiting teachers do not view themselves in this manner and prefer the case-work specialist role, having no taste for action to fit curriculum in and into the school setting. In one instance however, there is clear evidence that a visiting teacher can help "keep a staff honest" in its appraisal of pupils and learning.

B. School-Community Agent

The school-community agent continues to pose the most difficult problems in terms of role analysis and assessment of effectiveness. We have created a two-headed role and have left this poor new beast to the mercies of administrative style differentials. And theirs are many sharp swords. We have stated to the Project schools that the Agent shall serve as the after-school and evening program director. We have also stated that this person is a specialized detached social worker who will serve as liaison between school and community. We tend more and more to believe that the true role is that of detached worker, that any other role work is inappropriate use of special skills. The program director role should in the

future be held by some other person working closely with the Agent, who shall then be a full-time detached worker. On an action level however, we find that in only one school does the Agent work as a detached worker with the full approval of his administrator. Generally, in the other schools the primary role is that of programmer, coordinator, and general "handyman" for the good of the school and its community. The agents have various degrees of capacity and skill, ranging from full professional to near incompetence. Add to this variance the range of administrative styles within seven schools and one sees a potentially greater rift between the ideal and actual role of the School-Community Agent. Despite disharmonies and tensions it is quite clear that this new kind of school person has had beneficial impact upon all seven schools.

The agents have nearly completed a syllabus describing the role of the school-community agent. This work was done with the active participation of Dr. Eugne Litwak, University of Michigan, School of Social Work. This syllabus provides a comprehensive view of our experience in this relatively new social work field. The result of this cooperative study may provide some needed answers to the future role of school-community agents.

C. <u>The Coaching Teacher</u>

In the past year the Project Staff has attempted to move the coaching teacher from one of direct remediation with pupils to that of school reading expert.and teachers' consultant. The goal then, would be to provide in-service training, coordinated curriculum planning, and necessary skills for each teacher of reading, through the services of the coaching teacher. The language arts consultant on our staff has attempted to work toward a solid conceptualization of this new role.

Efforts in this direction have been good in those schools where administrative style permits change. In other schools the coaching teacher has remained primarily a remediation person working with small groups of pupils.

VII. Bus Trips

The entire Project has taken full advantage of the bus and bus driver now maintained for the sole purpose of field trip experiences. Our bus trips for the year total 716. Anecdotal evidence seems to point out that easily arranged field experiences have benefit for children and their curriculum. Several schools have systematically pursued the science of field trips and their application to total curriculum.

VIII. Project Staff

The Project staff throughout the demonstration project has provided a unique role for seven schools. It has served as a quasi-administrative center, a clearing house for school problems, a guidance center for teacher problems, a catalyst for change and improvement, a supply center, bus dispatch center, research orientation center, new teacher orientation center, in-service workshop center, a haven for those in need of help or conversation, and an information center for other city agencies and volunteer groups. The Staff is a known source of many things for many people. It appears to have filled, for seven schools at least, certain service vacuums in the school system. Project Staff too, needs thorough-going evaluation.

IX. Evaluation

Evaluation procedures are unchanged. We continue to work with the evaluation design provided upon the inception of the Project. We continue efforts in concert with the University of Michigan, School of Social Work. We are also working with the nucleus of a new proposal for a future project. We are in constant communication with other school officials in an effort to implement the successful aspects of this project. Into this no man's land, where we must provide recommendations for change, practices backed up by some kind of significant proof (which may not include the hard proof of markedly increased achievement) we are now, with some trepidation, preparing to move.